

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. GOODLATTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, somewhere in this Capitol, behind closed doors, the Democrats, by themselves, are writing a health care reform bill that is going to cost the taxpayers of this country more than \$1 trillion.

Added on top of the enormous debt that we already have, this legislation is also going to include mandates that are going to risk millions of American jobs. At a time when we have nearly 10 percent unemployment and nearly 15 million people in this country looking for work, they're going to pass legislation that's going to cost millions of more jobs if they attempt to mandate on small businesses, which are struggling, an additional obligation of an 8½ percent payroll tax.

In addition, this is going to harm our senior citizens in a multitude of ways. Those of them who are on Medicare Advantage plans, like thousands in my congressional district in Virginia, are going to lose the opportunity to participate in those plans as they take \$162 billion in cuts out of that portion of Medicare and \$400 billion in cuts from Medicare overall.

Save our seniors. Vote against this bad plan.

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(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, we need health care reform right now. We need it on behalf of the 47 million people who don't have insurance. We need it on behalf of the 217 in my district who don't have any insurance.

They talk about costs. What costs are going to go up if we don't do anything about health coverage?

Right now, many of our seniors are suffering. They're wondering how they're going to pay their health care bills, how they're going to put food on the table and how they're going to take care of themselves. A lot of youth are asking: How are we going to provide health insurance for a lot of us who don't have it?

We owe it to the American people. This is not about maintaining the status quo, and this is not about protecting the insurance companies. This is about doing something for the American people. It's time that we have a health plan that covers all Americans to make sure that we're not left out, to make sure that everybody has the ability to enjoy their quality of life and to be able to say: You know what? I know that I'm going to get coverage, and it doesn't matter where I am.

I am not going to maintain the status quo. With the Republicans, it's all about maintaining the status quo, and that's not what America wants. We

need to make sure that we have a health plan.

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(Mr. ALEXANDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID has included an opt-out plan into this health care plan. We all know that it is still just a government-run plan that's going to require a vote of the legislature.

Now, do we really think that the Governor and the legislature are going to vote for a plan that opts them out of the plan but yet requires the taxpayers of that State to pay for that plan? Why, of course not.

Whether it's opt-out, opt-in, trigger plan—whatever it's called—it's still a government-run plan that's going to create an unfair advantage for the government against private insurance, causing many people to lose their plans.

I am not going to vote for a plan that raises taxes, that cuts benefits or that drives a Washington bureaucrat between the patients whom I represent and the physicians.

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(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, during my recent trips back to my congressional district, I spent time with many small business owners who are still in business and who are able to continue to keep their doors open, but they do so by cutting back the health care benefits to themselves and to their workers. In some cases, they're getting rid of health care, and they lament that fact because they are very fond of their workforce. They believe that they're very productive and that they've helped them, but they simply cannot afford it.

They're part of a larger movement in this country of businesses, both large and small, to get out of the health care field and to stop offering these benefits, in some cases, to new hires and, in some cases, to all of their employees. We're seeing this with a record number of companies. Why are they doing that?

It's for the same reason that families are struggling. It's because the costs of health care continue to go up and up and up. It's crushing America's families and it's crushing America's businesses.

That's why we're going to have in the next couple of weeks a vote on health care in this House and in the Senate, and we will send a bill to the President's desk so that, finally, we will have real competition in this system and so that insurance companies will no longer run this system for their fun and profit.

The time for change is coming. It is time now for health care for all Americans.

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(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, one of the groups which is suffering under the tough economic times is seniors.

Some are still working to earn enough money just to make ends meet. Some are on fixed incomes, and every slight increase in expenses can cause them to experience difficult times.

That's why I'm very concerned about the Democrats' health care proposal to make massive cuts to Medicare Advantage plans, which would take benefits away from our senior citizens, even though President Obama has promised Americans that, if they like their health care plans, they can keep them.

The Democrats' plan to cut Medicare Advantage will limit choices; it will cause seniors to lose their coverage; it will increase prescription drug premiums by as much as 20 percent. It will even have an exceptionally harmful impact on seniors in rural areas when we try to force them into a one-size-fits-all government plan.

I will not support a health care plan that cuts benefits for millions of our seniors, who have worked their entire lives paying into this system. We can't ask our seniors on fixed incomes to pay higher costs, and we can't force seniors off of their health care plans they choose.

As a Republican, I am for health care reform, but it's wrong to finance health care reform on the backs of our seniors.

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(Mr. SCOTT of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, America is a great country. It is the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

The reason that it is the greatest country on the face of the Earth is that, at great moments of crisis, this country has risen to the occasion. When it was during the Depression, we rose to the occasion. When we needed Social Security, we rose to the occasion. With Medicare, we rose to the occasion.

Also at that time, there were the naysayers. There were people who would just say "no." That's what my friends on the other side of the aisle did. Where is their plan? They have no plan.

At this moment of crisis, we Democrats are standing here, and are saying America deserves better. America deserves the best. Now, they talk about our being in the dark with plans? We've had health care debates. We've had